



California Department of Veterans Affairs

NEWS FOR VETERANS

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INTRODUCING CDVA'S EXECUTIVE TEAM

In order to better introduce the California Veterans Community to the California Department of Veterans Affairs' (CDVA) new Executive Team appointed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger over the past year, CDVA's "News For Veterans" will be sharing some of their biographical accomplishments with our subscribers over the coming weeks. In addition to Governor Schwarzenegger's support for veterans' legislation and a strong CDVA budget, he believes that our veterans deserve dedicated professionals leading a department full of committed staff who serve veterans with all their abilities. In light of the state's difficult fiscal situation, the CDVA team appointed by the Governor is also uniquely qualified because of their past success in business as well as in community and public service. In partnership with veteran representatives and advocates across the state, the CDVA leadership is determined to promote and deliver the benefits provided by the grateful State of California to its deserving veterans and their families. We hope these introductions will help you become better acquainted with some of the professionals working everyday at CDVA on behalf of California's 2.3 million veterans.

INTRODUCTION TO CDVA SECRETARY TOM JOHNSON, FACHE

Thomas Johnson is a Vietnam Era Veteran with more than 34 years in healthcare management experience. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed Tom Johnson as the Secretary of California's Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) in February of 2004. The California State Senate unanimously confirmed his nomination in August of 2004.

Secretary Johnson is a graduate from the University of Minnesota and holds a Masters Degree in public health from the University of California, Los Angeles. His knowledge of healthcare finance and management began with his service in the Medical Service Corps branch of the United States Army. He helped manage a 600-bed hospital and acted as commanding officer for Army patients dislocated from their units in Vietnam.

Upon his return from overseas deployment and discharge from the Army, Secretary Johnson, at age 27, became the youngest hospital administrator in California when he took over as Administrator of Tulare District Hospital. Then at age 32, Secretary Johnson became one of the youngest members ever to achieve Fellowship status in the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE).

For over 20 years Secretary Johnson led Kaweah Delta Healthcare District, in Visalia,

California, as the Chief Executive Officer. This Healthcare District is one of the largest in California, employing more people (2800) and operating more healthcare facilities (4 separate hospitals and multiple outpatient services in 3 communities) than CDVA currently employs and operates.

During his tenure as CEO, the Healthcare District received the following state and national recognitions:

- Recognized in 2000 as the number one hospital in the nation for community service, receiving the prestigious Foster-McGraw award.
- Recognized as having one of the top 100 heart surgery programs in the nation.
- Recognized as having the best Medical Wellness Facility in California and one of the top 10 in the nation.
- Recognized as having a Rehabilitation Facility that was in the top 10% nationally in terms of outcomes and service.

Secretary Johnson served on the Board and on the Executive Committee of the California Hospital Association and he served as Chairman of the Board for the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California. He also served as a Regent for the American College of Healthcare Executives and as a Member of the Regional Policy Board of the American Hospital Association. In recognition of his professional accomplishments, upon retiring as CEO from Kaweah Healthcare District in 2001, he was awarded the prestigious Award of Merit by the California Hospital Association.

Since 2001, Secretary Johnson has continued to remain active in the healthcare field as a consultant to various organizations, including The California Endowment. He also continues to serve as Chairman of the Board of the California Institute for Nursing and Healthcare. Secretary Johnson has also been appointed by Governor Schwarzenegger to the Nursing Task Force and the "Anti-Dumb" Growth Task Force.

Within the community, Secretary Johnson was active as President of the Visalia Educational Foundation, President of the West Visalia Kiwanis Club, President of the Visalia Seahawks Swim Team, Secretary of the Wish Upon A Star Foundation, Founding and continuing member of the Tulare County Boys and Girls Club, Charter member of the Breakfast Rotary Club, member of the YMCA Board, member of the Chamber of Commerce Board and Chair of several Chamber committees. Secretary Johnson is an avid outdoorsman and enjoys hiking, running marathons and traveling with his wife Betty to visit their 6 grandkids who live in California and Switzerland.

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